



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

2395-2636 (Print); 2321-3108 (online)

THE CHARACTERS CONTROLLED BY 'ID' - A STUDY BASED ON JHUMPA'S SHORT STORIES COLLECTION, 'AN UNACCUSTOMED EARTH' AND 'INTERPRETER OF MALADIES'

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to study psychoanalytical aspects in the short stories collection 'An Unaccustomed Earth' and 'Interpreter of Maladies' of one of the famous Diasporic Indian writer, Jhumpa Lahiri. The element of 'Id' from 'Personality Structure' of well known 'Psychoanalytic Theory' given by famous scientist Sigmund Freud can be seen vividly in the collection of short stories. Jhumpa is known for the unique style of writing. She takes the characters from different areas. She herself had double diaspora. Most of her writings has the mix-cultural concept. The present study will throw light on different characters and their personalities from her famous Short stories collections, 'An Unaccustomed Earth' and 'Interpreter of Maladies'. This study will help the readers and researchers to understand and analyse the characters of fiction, play or Novel psychologically, with the help of 'Psychoanalytic theory' of Sigmund Freud.

Key Words: Sigmund Freud, Psychoanalytic Theory, Personality structure, id, Interpreter of Maladies and An Unaccustomed Earth.

Introduction

According to Freud the id is unconscious by definition:

It is the dark, inaccessible part of our personality, what little we know of it we have learned from our study of the dream and of course the construction of neurotic symptoms, and most of that is of a negative character and can be described only as a contrast to the ego. We approach the id with analogies: we call it a chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitations. ...It is filled with energy reaching it from the instincts, but it has no organization, produces no collective will, but only a striving to bring about the satisfaction of the instinctual needs subject

to the observance of the pleasure principle.⁽¹⁾

In Psychoanalytic theory, Freud divides the personality into three parts, i.e. Id, Ego and Super Ego. To know the Personality of any person or imagined Human Beings, these elements are analysed in one's character. All three lie at different ages in the personality of the individual but there is always the domination of one of its elements in one's personality. The person who is dominated by Id is usually pleasure loving, like wise, who has ego in the personality, they are balanced in nature and Super Ego domination makes the person morally high, that is why it comes under Morality Principle.

(chapter 1- 17 -38 line) If within the Id a state of calm and satisfaction prevails, So

that there is no occasion for any instinctual impulse to invade the ego in search of gratification and there to produce feelings of tension and unpleasure, we can learn nothing of the Id contents. It follows. At least theoretically, that the id is not under allcondition open to observation. The situation is ofcourse different in case of the Superego. Its contents are far most part conscious and so can be directly arrived at by endopsychic perception. Nevertheless, our picture of the superego always tend to hazy when harmonious relationship exist between it and the ego. We then say that the two co incide. i.e. at such moments the superego is not perceptible as a separate institution either to the subject himself or to an outside observer. Its outlines clear only when it confronts the ego with hostility or atleast with criticism. The superego like the id becomes perceptible in the state which its produces within the ego: for example when its criticism evokes a sense of guilt.

Now, ID is a group of instinct which is present within the unconscious level. It is also considered as the selfish part of the personality. Id is based on 'Pleasure Principle', it avoids painful experiences and seeks pleasure in everything, This we can understand, as a demand to take care of the needs immediately. This aspect of personality is driven by internal and basic drives and needs. Due to this quality, ID is impulsive and often unaware of implication of actions and its consequences.

Purpose of Study

The Present study will be the Great help for the Readers and Researchers. It will help the individual to analyse the character of any fiction , play or novel . It will also help to understand the stories and its concept and characters in the psychological way. It will make reading interesting and Logical. As , when we know the characters well , we enjoys the reading more and more.

The 'ID' element of Freud's Personality structure in the characters of Jhumpa's short stories collections 'An Unaccustomed Earth' and 'Interpreter of Maladies': Lahiri's cross cultural experiences gives the Great knowledge of Immigrant and their Experinces. She also had the double Diaspora so she know the exact feeling of Immigrants. She compares

the traditional life of India with the modern life of the America and its culture. Lahiri has the huge command on multi-cultural writings.

Jhumpa Lahiri's 'Unaccustomed Earth' is the collection of short stories, divided into three sections where the last section 'Hema and Kaushik' is divided into three Parts. In the very first section which is the Title story 'An Unaccustomed Earth', we find that the character of the Protagonist Pranab chakroborty who wanted to returned back to his home town from Boston, married an American Woman Deborah out of the pleasure principle of Freud's Personality element.

At larger gatherings, they kissed and held hands in front of everyone (UE 68)

The above lines depicts the dominance of id in the personality of both the characters. Id is instinctual drive and it wants to achieve the instant satisfaction. It is usually free in nature and does'not affected by the reality or morality principle , but its sole aim is to attain pleasure.

In Jhumpa Lahiri's collection of short stories, 'Interpreter of Maladies', clearly portrays the Indian Diasporic life in America. There is always sense of longing in their hearts to return to their homeland. This can be observed in the story 'Sexy' where dev who had an affair with Miranda , still had an urge to go to India. In Dev character there is the domination of id element, who out of pleasure principle had an extramarital affair with Miranda.

Somehow, without the wife there, it didn't seem so wrong. At first Miranda and Dev spent every night together, almost. He explained that he couldn't spend the whole night at her place, because his wife called every day at six in the morning, from India, where it was four in the afternoon. And so he left her apartment at two, three, often as late as four in the morning, driving back to his house in the suburbs. During the day he called her every hour, it seemed, from work, or from his cell phone. Once he learned Miranda's schedule he left her a message each evening at five-thirty, when she was on the T, coming back to her apartment, just so, he said, she could hear his voice as soon as she walked through the door. "I'mthinking about you," he'd say on the tape. "I can't wait to see you." He told her he liked spending time in her

apartment, with its kitchen counter no wider than a breadbox, and scratchy floors that sloped, and a buzzer in the lobby that always made a slightly embarrassing sound when he pressed it. He said he admired her for moving to Boston, where she knew no one, instead of remaining in Michigan, where she'd grown up and gone to college. When Miranda told him it was nothing to admire, that she'd moved to Boston precisely for that reason, he shook his head. "I know what it's like to be lonely," he said, suddenly serious, and at that moment Miranda felt that he understood her—understood how she felt some nights on the T, after seeing a movie on her own, or going to a bookstore to read magazines, or having drinks with Laxmi, who always had to meet her husband at Alewife station in an hour or two. In less serious moments Dev said he liked that her legs were longer than her torso, something he'd observed the first time she walked across a room naked. "You're the first," he told her, admiring her from the bed. "The first woman I've known with legs this long. (1) (IM 88-89)

In fact, Miranda's character was also dominated by ID, although her personality later has Ego instinct in later part of her life. Miranda knew that Dev was married still she preferred sleeping with a married man, as she too was fulfilling her sexual desires with Dev, despite of knowing the fact that the Dev was already married, she continued having a relationships with him and enjoyed his company.

In another short story, "Interpreter of Maladies", the character, Mrs. Das was also dominated by ID, and out of id element in her personality, she goes on fulfilling her desire and as a result she bear a child out of her infidelity with her husband.

"Don't you see? For eight years I haven't been able to express this to anybody, not to friends, certainly not to Raj. He doesn't even suspect it. He thinks I'm still in love with him. Well, don't you have anything to say?"

"About what?"

"About what I've just told you. About my secret, and about how terrible it makes me feel.

I feel terrible looking at my children, and at Raj, always terrible. I have terrible urges, Mr. Kapasi, to throw things away. One day I had the urge to throw everything I own out the window, the television, the children, everything. Don't you think it's unhealthy?" He was silent. (2)(IM 65)

Mrs. Das, The self-centered wife of Mr. Das, whose infidelity has secluded her from her husband and children. Mrs. Das had very little connection with the people around her. She cares only about fulfillment of her needs and wishes.

"While Mr. Das adjusted his telephoto lens, Mrs. Das reached into her straw bag and pulled out a bottle of colorless nail polish, which she proceeded to stroke on the tip of her index finger.

The little girl stuck out a hand. "Mine too. Mommy, do mine too."

"Leave me alone," Mrs. Das said, blowing on her nail and turning her body slightly.

"You're making me mess up"(3) (IM-48)

Having an affair and Bobby as a illegitimate child, eight years ago, she never revealed a Truth either to Mr. Das or to Bobby.

Although she confessed all to Mr. Kapasi, the another character of the story, who himself had a short fling with Mrs. Das, during guiding her family tour and listening her maladies. By seeing his interest in the married woman, We can conclude that Mr. Kapasi's character was also dominated by Element of id of Freud's Personality structure, which seeks pleasure and avoids pain.

Conclusion

Now from the above examples from the short stories of Jhumpa Lahiri, we can see the characters and the domination of Id in those characters, All the three elements of Freud's personality structure have its domination in one's personality at the different level or age group of one's life, as discussed above. But one of the three elements always has more domination in one's personality and that can be analysed by the proper and deep observation of one's behaviour. Now after reading Freud's work and about all three elements under Freud's 'Personality Structure', from his very own 'Psychoanalytic Theory', we can observe and fit

the ones nature who has domination of any of the element in his/her personality and behaviour, and as a result we can easily conclude that which person's personality has more domination of that particular element. After this we can find that the person or character has dominated by id,ego, or Super – Ego . Thus this will help us to understand the character or the behaviour of the person or imagined human beings(Characters from stories) in a much better way. Once we understand them, we can know the writer's point of view in a most vivid way and his main aim of writing that particular piece of art, and as a result , This can eliminate the ambiguity between the writer's and reader's point of view. Thus, the proper understanding of text and the personality of the individual or the characters from any play , fiction or drama or any other text can be generated by using 'Psychoanalytic Theory' of Sigmund Freud , a tool for observation and calculation of ones's behaviour in an appropriate manner.

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